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South East Europe TCP

Best Practice Report

BASILICATA INNOVAZIONE

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0.1	First draft	IEA	12.01.2011
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Everybody please state revision index and short description of what has been done + partners involved and date.

Final approval	Name	Partner
Reviewer	Domenico Ricchiuti	IEA ITALIA

1. Best Practice Title

Basilicata Innovazione

2. Location of Best Practice

Country, region, town

Italy, Basilicata Region, Potenza

3. Best Practice Executive Summary

Describe briefly (max 10 lines) the GP context (partnership, funding, objectives, approach followed, results)

Basilicata Innovazione has been developed thanks to an accord between the regional government and AREA Science Park, the science and technology park of Trieste, signed in June 2009 with the aim of providing the regional territory with a permanent body useful to give services and instruments to sustain the enterprises competitiveness and to valorize the research.

The accord allowed to transfer into Basilicata Region a model successfully tried by AREA, able to integrate and create a system with the realities already present and active: excellent research centers and dynamic productive companies, especially SMEs.

Public funds (community, national and regional) have been used as financial resources. The initiative offers to the regional companies a direct point of access to the international applied research state of the art, to find skills, partners, funds and assistance useful to realize product, process and management innovation projects. The expected results are creation of new enterprises, increase of employment and regional economic development.

4. Best Practice Classification

Best Practice Theme

- Research Transformed to Innovative Product*
- Research Transformed to Innovative Service*
- Research Transformed to Innovative Methodology*
- Research Transformed to Innovative Production Process*
- Financial Mechanism for Transformation of Research to Innovation*
- Support Mechanism for Transformation of Research to Innovation*
- Other (describe)*

Best Practice Research / Application Areas

- Industrial / Manufacturing Systems*
 - Industrial Informatics and Communications*
 - Intelligent Devices*
 - Distributed Control Systems*
 - Flexible Manufacturing Systems*
- Embedded Systems*
 - Industrial Embedded Systems*
 - Nomadic Environments*
 - Private Spaces*
 - Public Infrastructures*

5. Description of Best Practice

5.1 Best Practice Context

Overall background of the Best Practice. Location, socio-economic, technical & policy background of the BP (max 10 lines)

Basilicata is a Region of Southern Italy characterized by an economy not completely developed and afflicted by more than a problem. Despite these problems the territory sees the presence of excellent research institutes involved in particular sectors, such as the space observation of the Earth, agro industry, environment, energy etc. Next to these institutes, a dynamic productive fabric operates (above all SMEs).

The prevalence of small and medium enterprises make the research possible prevalently into these research centers apart of the academic world and of a few number of enterprises.

Most of the companies, being of small dimensions, are lacking in valid R&D departments.

5.1.1 Policy Elements

What are the policy initiatives that have influenced the contextual environment of BP: innovation promotion policies, research funding policies, certification etc. as well as relevant tools (max 10 lines)

The development of the project has been influenced by the intervention of the local government, which has given an economic aid, using European funds, and by the interest and involvement of one of the biggest Italian science and technology parks, as result of the necessity of give an answer to the local economic and scientific needing.

5.1.2 Socio-economic & Other factors

Other contextual factors such as customer / target market addressed, international validity, customer density, economic conditions, customer values, research area addressed (max 10 lines)

As said above the target “market” i.e. the end users of the project are all the economic development protagonists that believe in innovation and that need the help of a solid organization to develop their projects.

5.2 Objectives

Aim of the project, specific objectives & strategies to achieve these objectives (max 10 lines)

Basilicata Innovazione was born from the need of supporting the development of the regional economic system through the valorization of the skills and the results of the research system in Basilicata. The specific aim, in particular, is that of start a stable economic development process centered on the technological transfer, valorizing the research results and increasing the quantity and quality of the skills transferred to the SMEs. The strategy used is based on the offer of a plurality of qualified services, instruments and specialized skills to sustain the competitiveness of the entrepreneurial system, the valorization of research, the birth of new enterprises with high technological rate. The regional initiative works as a “link” between enterprises and research centers with the aim of realizing innovation projects exploiting the scientific research results and of generating the diffusion of an innovation culture.

6. Process

Describe the project including key concepts and the overall approach followed. Indicate project end users, target market, main project phases, problems encountered and solutions, problem resolution (max 10 lines)

The services offered by Basilicata Innovazione are addressed to researchers (University, public and private research bodies) from one side and to the production system from the other side.

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The target companies belong to all the productive sectors, with a particular attention to those sectors considered strategic for the regional development: observation of the Earth, automotive, agroindustry, environment and energy. In general, the target is represented by everyone has innovative ideas to develop.

The methodology used consists in 3 operative steps:

- *Door-to-door activity* at the companies and researchers by the staff specialized in detecting the needs of the end users (also the unexpressed ones)
- *Propaedeutic analysis* of economic exploiting of the research results and of the innovation needs of the companies.
- *Constant assistance* during all the phases of the innovation and business creation path.

The main problems found have been originated by an unwillingness of the companies to the innovation and by a research activity not enough oriented to the market. In order to overcome the endogenous obstacles to the system, targeted actions have been foreseen to diffuse an innovation culture in the regional territory.

6.1 Project Design

Project design based on targeted market complete understanding, project structure, policies and procedures, management and implementation actions (max 10 lines)

The project has been conceived in a way that assures the real identification of the company/research center needs.

Visits to the company or to the research institution, evaluation of the needs, identification of the most appropriate solution, accompanying during the development path, final verify of the targets achievement: in a few words a method that guarantees a constant assistance during all the phases of the innovation path.

In particular, the main services offered are:

- Information about patents and documents
- The use of an innovative instrument of Business Intelligence that allows to evaluate the potential market of the product/service object of the idea
- Studies and analyses about the state of the art of technologies and markets
- Studies targeted to evaluate the financial-economic reliability of the future partners
- Analysis of the needing and of the innovation gap
- Analysis of the business efficiency (through benchmarking tools)
- Definition of the innovation path, planning the innovation project
- Solutions for the innovation of the product (materials, techniques etc.)
- Training workshops
- Assistance in the creation of an enterprise
- Etc.

It is a complete offer of services to realize new products, to make processes even more efficient and environmentally-friendly, to improve the internal organization and to create new businesses valorizing the local research results.

6.2 Project Management

Activities relevant to project coordination and management, project documentation and reporting, quality control, validation and verification (max 10 lines)

For the management of the foreseen activities internally and externally developed tools are used (studied ad hoc to satisfy specific needing). Some of these tools are: Be-Miner (a tool for the

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management of information, registries, activities, needs, projects etc.) Experts Album (database of external skills necessary to the development of innovation projects) Bench-Profile (benchmarking tool for the improvement of the business efficiency) More (methodology for the evaluation of the economic-financial reliability of potential customers and suppliers).

In line with the AREA proposed model, the activities are managed using quality systems, such as verify reports and processes management in conformity with the quality standards. At the end of the activities with the companies eventual fallouts are verified, through specific feedback forms and a questionnaire system for the customer satisfaction evaluation, foreseeing eventual adaptations to improve the internal performance indexes.

6.3 Project Implementation

Main elements associated with the project implementation. Realization of new idea, or new technological realization or improvement / novelty to known technology and means to achieve this. Innovation associated with the project realization in terms of new products, services, methodologies. Marketing, advertising and customer service. (max 10 lines)

Basilicata Innovazione offers an integrate system of activities and services for the development of the technological innovation and the valorization of research for entrepreneurs and researchers, to support them in all the phases of the innovation process.

There are different areas of intervention to which specific internal services correspond:

Technological audit and information to support the business decisions, valorization of research, business creation, centre for information about documents and patents. For the execution of its activities, Basilicata Innovazione makes use of the collaboration of important international actors, such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) of Boston, that allows the privileged access to the technologies and skills present in the Institute, the SBI (Strategic Business Insights), world leader in the monitoring of technologies, for the use of the business intelligence tool Explorer that allows to obtain constant updates about the technologies present on the world markets, and for the use of technological forecast.

Thanks to the accord with the Matech of Padua (Italy), Basilicata Innovazione has a database of innovative materials and technologies to implement in the business productive processes with the aim of improving the product and of reducing the development times and costs.

6.4 Project Evaluation

Project feedback mechanisms and evaluation mechanisms. (max 10 lines)

The feedback mechanism foreseen to verify the correct execution of the project is the Strategic Direction Committee, composed by representatives of the regional government and by delegates of the AREA Consortium, that meets periodically.

The task of the SDC is that of monitoring the correct progress of the project in terms of results, budget and timing and of defining, at the same time, the lines to follow in the implementation of the program and of its promotion in different environments and in the eventual identification of further programmatic times on which focus the activities, identifying new issues.

7. Description of Research team/Institution

Short description of R&D team and institution (max. 10 lines)

The project does not foresee an internal R&D activity, but the valorization of the skills coming from the research world.

A staff made by 4 collaborators works closely with University professors and researchers, following a path composed of 2 phases: analysis, validation and definition of the valorization path; 12

technological brokers dedicated to the contact with the entrepreneurs through activities of external inspections to catch the innovation needs of the company related to products, productive processes or organization and to identify possible improvement solutions; 4 collaborators committed in the support of the new entrepreneurial ideas and other 3 occupied in activities of documental researches and of prior art for patents. Next to these professional figures there is a staff assigned to the administration and communication and 2 persons dedicated to the design and to the management of community projects. The whole internal personnel has a degree, a master or a specialization title and, in a few cases, a PhD.

8. Applied Financial Mechanism

Describe financial mechanisms applied in transformation of research into innovation within BP, as well as means of connecting scientific research team and financiers (max. 1000 char.)

The financial resources for the realization of the initiative come from community, national and regional funds: APQ Ricerca, from the Operative Program ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) 2007-2013, from the Operative Regional Program (POR) Basilicata 2000-2006 and from internal regional resources, for an overall amount of €9.800.000,00 for the first three years of activity.

The financial resources allocated allow to offer to the end users the aforementioned services for free. While, for how concerning the first mile incubator, once made the Development Groups in the society, Basilicata Innovazione participate with a minority share and agrees with the proponent the most appropriate way-out mechanisms. The aim is that of reinvesting the incomes deriving from the transfer of the shares in new entrepreneurial initiatives and going on, in this way, in feeding the virtuous mechanism of transformation of an innovative idea into a successful business.

9. Impact and benefits

Describe achieved benefits of R&D team and/or enterprise implemented innovation, as well as impacts on institutional and policy levels. (max. 1000 char.)

Benefits and advantages achieved:

For entrepreneurs:

Access to the technologies market, development of new technologies, products and services, creation of new innovative enterprises, development of new entrepreneurial assets etc.

For researchers:

Protection of intellectual property, realization of start up from innovative ideas, new collaboration opportunities with other enterprises etc.

For the Territory:

Creation of new enterprises, creation of employment, development of the Regional economy.

10. Sustainability

Provide information on sustainability of innovation after financial aid within implemented financial mechanisms, and some multiplier effects as replication and extension of the action performed in BP. Expected use of Best Practice and lifecycle considerations. (max. 1000 char.)

Considering the positive fallouts of the project in terms of turnover and employment increase registered until now, and considering the future results that the initiative proposes to achieve and basing also on the positive feedback that has been finding at an entrepreneurial and research level, it is considered that the stakeholders, once the public funds will have run out, will be available to invest in the Project providing a own contribution to going on in focusing on innovation as development factor for the territory.

11. Repeatability and transferability

Lessons learned from the project implementation team. Repeatability and transferability of the project. (max. 1000 char.)

Basilicata Innovazione Project derives from the transfer and the opportune adaptation of a winning methodology already experienced and applied in Friuli Venezia Giulia Region by the science and technology park AREA. Its repeatability has been made possible thanks to a preliminary analysis of the regional socio-economic context, of the current critical issues and of the development potentialities. The main lessons learned are relative to some adjustments and adaptations to the local context that the peculiarities of each territory require. The proposed model is in a startup phase in other Italian regions.

12. Evaluation

Describe reasons and evaluation criteria why the described example is a best practice. (max. 1000 char.)

The reasons for which this example is considered a BP are to be searched in the particular collaboration created between two different economic contexts, i.e. between a public institution of a relatively poor region (Basilicata Region) and a science and technology park located in one of the richest part of the country. It gives an excellent access point to innovation to all the local development protagonists.

Its innovative character, the applied methodology, the tools used, the high qualified staff and the results achieved, give to the project a key role for the regional territory and a landmark for the other territories. The results achieved are evaluable and measurable from a quantitative and qualitative point of view, on the basis of the prefixed indexes and of the feedbacks from the stakeholders, users and policy makers.

Initiatives like Basilicata Innovazione are concrete ways to help the local economic fabric to reach higher levels of innovation and competitiveness.

13. Contact of research team/institution

Name, address, tel., fax, e-mail, URL

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14. Contact of financial mechanism facilitator

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